

DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Over 150 Arrested in Largest Shoulder Tap Decoy Operation in California History

ABC, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Los Angeles Police Department and 11 other agencies try to reduce Youth Access to Alcohol

(Norwalk) - Officers from the California Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC), the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and the Los Angeles Police Department joined forces with 11 other law enforcement agencies from 4 counties on Saturday, March 15 2008, in the largest Shoulder Tap Decoy Operation ever assembled in California.

The huge task force operation resulted in at least 152 arrests. 144 individuals were cited for furnishing alcoholic beverages to minors, 8 were arrested for other violations including possession of narcotics. The operation was conducted in 20 different cities in Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego and Santa Barbara Counties to reduce youth access during the St. Patrick's Day Holiday Weekend and send a strong safety message prior to Spring Break.

ABC Investigators and local law enforcement conducted a program called a Decoy Shoulder Tap Operation which targets adults who purchase alcohol for people under 21 years of age. Under the program, a minor under the direct supervision of a peace officer will stand outside a liquor or convenience store and ask patrons to buy them alcohol. The minor indicates in some way he or she is underage and cannot purchase the alcohol.

If the adults agree to purchase alcohol for the minor, investigators then arrest and cite them for furnishing alcohol to the minor. The penalty for furnishing alcohol to a minor is a minimum \$1000 fine and 24 hours of community service.

The program is intended to reduce the availability of alcohol to minors. According to the American Medical Association, underage drinking can increase chances of risky sexual behavior and teen pregnancy, juvenile delinquency, compromise health, and result in unintentional injury and death.

Funding for this program was provided by ABC through the Grant Assistance Program (GAP). The Grant Assistance Program provides money to local law enforcement to address alcohol - related concerns in communities throughout the State.

ABC is a department of the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency, which is under the direction of Secretary Dale E. Bonner, a member of the Governor's Cabinet.